NAVIGATING EGULEN FOLK

TO THE WORKELEDE

Many offices currently have a mix of four generational cohorts under their employ, namely Traditionalists (or Silents), Baby Boomers (or Me Generation), Generation X (commonly abbreviated as GenX), and Millennials (or Generation Y). Each has different values and approaches to the workplace, outlined below:



Traditionalists

Born between 1922 - 1945*, this generation is influenced by the Great Depression and World War II



Baby Boomers

Born between 1945 - 1965*, this generation is shaped by the Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam, and the space race



Generation X

Born between 1966 - 1979*, this generation is self-reliant, comfortable with change, and seeks continuous learning



Millennials

Born between 1980 - 1999*, this generation is innately comfortable with technology, adaptable, and open to change



Disciplined and processoriented, with a strong sense of obligation

Possesses a strong sense of personal worth and value, and are determined to work hard and succeed

Results-oriented and seek to get the job done correctly, but value flexibility to complete tasks when and where they want

The most highly-educated generation, utilizing a strong comfort with technology to achieve end results in a different way



Content to "pay their dues", and remain very loyal to employers

Typically career-focused, and loyal to their employers

More likely to seek continuous learning opportunities, and are not overtly loyal to employers

Commonly thought to be less loyal to employers, but fiercely loyal to ideas, causes, or products they believe in



Embrace a formal approach in the workplace, respect authority and heirarchy, and resist disruption to "business as usual"

Respects authority, but encouraged by the social turmoil of their time to challenge leaders and seek to replace them

Taught to question authority, but this is viewed as a natural extension of communication and is not equated with disrespect

Questioning of authority and feel that respect must be earned, and not simply given based on an authoritative position



Career-oriented, and have been willing to put in long hours to complete tasks and succeed in the workforce

Very career-oriented; a generational challenge is a lack of work/life balance

Determined to do a good job, but not at the cost of their personal lives, valuing flexible schedules, even if that means making less money

Value job flexibility to work outside the traditional work schedule and enjoy balanced work and personal time

Considering the differences between the generations regarding values and approaches to the workplace, there are a number of practices that can be implemented in order to help members of each generation feel comfortable, accepted, and respected in the workplace:



Adapt and shift leadership styles to fit the needs of each employee



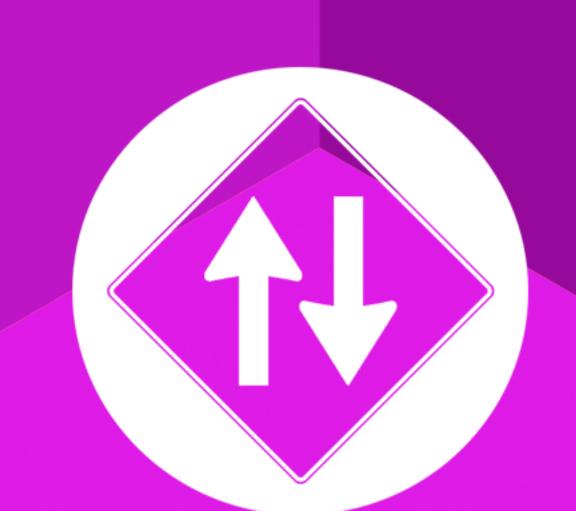
Clear, effective communication is critical; overcommunication is key to success



Address the training needs and differences of learning style between the generations



Help employees feel valued, and respect their desire for work/life balance



Be honest with coworkers, superiors, and subordinates



Ask questions to ensure that ideas and viewpoints presented are heard and understood



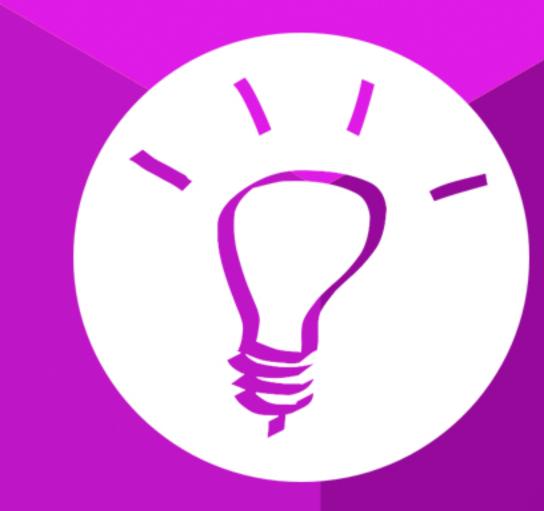
Adapt to change, new technology, customer needs, and ways of doing business



Avoid stereotyping others and assuming that differences of opinion are due to age differences



Focus on the common goals of the team, regardless of age range



Realize there are always opportunities to learn and improve



This infographic is based on the LocalGovU course *Generational Differences*. Please coordinate with your county's Risk Coordinator to gain access to this course, and dozens of other topics relevant to UCIP members

